

Message Text

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 01 STATE 103358

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ORIGIN ARA-17

INFO OCT-01 ADP-00 L-03 CIAE-00 INR-10 NSAE-00 RSC-01

SCS-03 PM-07 /042 R

DRAFTED BY ARA/ PAN: RBHOWARD: ZC

EXT. 22060 5/30/73

APPROVED BY ARA: RAHURWITCH

ARA/ PAN: LJHORWITZ

L/ ARA: TABOREK (PHONE)

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P 301830 Z MAY 73

FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMEMBASSY PANAMA PRIORITY

C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 103358

E. O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: BGEN, PFOR, PN, CU

SUBJECT: JOHNNY EXPRESS AND LAYLA EXPRESS

REF: PANAMA 2646

1. AS YET, THE BABUN BROTHERS HAVE NOT APPROACHED DEPT WITH REGARD TO RECOVERING VESSELS NOR HAVE WE HAD ANY INDICATION THAT THEY WILL SEEK USG ASSISTANCE. SINCE THE NATIONALITY OF OWNERSHIP OF THE JOHNNY AND LAYLA EXPRESS HAS NOT BEEN CLEARLY ESTABLISHED, SUGGEST YOU USE FOLLOWING LANGUAGE IN MAKING ORAL REPLY TO KOURUKLIS:

2. REGARDING THE TWO VESSELS, JOHNNY AND LAYLA EXPRESS, THE USG TRUSTS THAT AS A MATTER OF PRINCIPLE ANY DISPOSITION OF PROPERTY WOULD BE MADE IN ACCORDANCE WITH DUE PROCESS, FULLY SUPPORTED BY EVIDENCE. THE USG, THEREFORE, EXPECTS THAT THE PANAMANIAN GOVERNMENT WILL SCRUPULOUSLY FOLLOW ITS LEGAL AND JUDICIAL PROCEDURES IN DETERMINING DISPOSITION OF THESE TWO VESSELS. IN ADDITION TO OUR INTEREST IN THE VESSELS, WE HAVE CONSISTENTLY SOUGHT THE RELEASE OF THE US MASTER OF THE JOHNNY EXPRESS, CAPTAIN JOSE VILLA DIAZ, AND HAVE MADE IT CLEAR THAT HIS SAFE RETURN HAS

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FIRST PRIORITY. RUSH

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*** Current Handling Restrictions *** n/a

*** Current Classification *** CONFIDENTIAL

Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: PFOR, PN
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 30 MAY 1973
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: golinofr
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1973STATE103358
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: RBHOWARD: ZC
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GDS
Errors: n/a
Film Number: n/a
From: SECSTATE WASHDC
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1973/newtext/t19730556/aaaajxey.tel
Line Count: 64
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE
Office: ORIGIN AR
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators:
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: 73 PANAMA 2646
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: golinofr
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 23 JAN 2002
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <23-Jan-2002 by collinp0>; APPROVED <26 FEB 2002 by golinofr>
Review Markings:

Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
30 JUN 2005

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: <DBA CORRECTED> mcm 980310
Subject: JOHNNY EXPRESS AND LAYLA EXPRESS
TAGS: PFOR, CU, BGEN
To: PANAMA
Type: TE
Markings: Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 30 JUN 2005